

Tourism E-news

Tennessee Department of Tourism



E-News V04.8

Tennessee Tourism Vies for Attention at Party Conventions



▲ Commissioner Susan Whitaker (right), Randy Button, state Democratic Chairman, and Beth Harwell, state Republican Chairman, display one of the tourism promotional tee shirts distributed to Tennessee delegates at both conventions this summer.

Tennessee delegates to the National Democratic Convention and the National Republican Convention this summer are receiving tourism promotional items from the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development. The Democratic Convention was held in Boston, July 26-29. The Republican Convention will be held in New York City, Aug. 30- Sept. 2.

“Tennessee tourism transcends politics,” said Commissioner Susan Whitaker. “The conventions are broadcast around the world and provide us with a great opportunity to promote Tennessee to millions of viewers. Our goal is to market Tennessee in every possible way to potential out-of-state and in-state visitors,” Whitaker added.

“This is a great opportunity to promote Tennessee in an effort to bring new and better jobs to our state,” said Randy Button, state Democratic Chairman. “The delegates were thrilled to represent the state, not only by attending the convention, but also by promoting Tennessee.”

Beth Harwell, the Republican Chairman added, “It’s all about economic development and positive exposure for the state. Regardless of party affiliation, we are all proud to represent Tennessee.”

The promotional items include hats, buttons and tee shirts sporting the state’s new slogan, “Tennessee...The stage is set for you!” ■



◀ Tennessee Tourism slogan buttons, with flashing red lights set above the state's name, were among the items given to delegates to both conventions.

Memphis Awaits...Delegates to “Rock ‘n’ Roll” at the 2004 Governor’s Conference on Tourism



▲Closing Keynote Speaker is Arthur Keith of Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center

Closing Keynote Speaker Confirmed

Arthur Keith, senior vice president and general manager for Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center, will be the Keynote Speaker for the Closing Breakfast at the Governor’s Conference on Tourism at the Peabody Hotel in Memphis. The conference dates are September 14-16.

Keith joined Gaylord in February, 2004 from Harrah’s where he served as vice president of hotel operations for the Rio All-Suite Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada. Keith has also held similar positions at the Venetian Resort Hotel and Casino and the Doubletree Hotel Lincoln Centre in Dallas. He was part of the team that designed and constructed the \$300 million Station Casino Hotel complex in Kansas City, Missouri. Keith began his career at the Stouffer Renaissance Hotel Company, rising from manager trainee to assistant general manager of one of the company’s largest hotels, the Stouffer Harborplace Hotel in Baltimore, Maryland.

Keith is a graduate of Cornell University’s renowned School of Hotel Administration, where he served on the Cornell Student Management Corporation Board. He has been a guest speaker in the Dean’s Distinguished Guest Lecture Series, as well as a participant in Cornell’s Masters Program assessment program.

Countdown: Less than a Month Away, Register Now!

The annual Governor’s Conference on Tourism is less than a month away, and there’s still time to register online at the Tennessee Tourism Roundtable (TTR) site at www.tntourismroundtable.com.

Conference registration is \$199 per person, and special accommodation rates are available to delegates staying at the Peabody Hotel where the conference will be held. There are also separate registrations at the TTR online site for marketplace exhibitors and participants in the Durell Roberts Golf Classic at the T. O. Fuller State Park.

If you prefer to mail your conference registration, you may download the registration form and mail it back to TTR with your payment. If you need more information, call Cindy Bruce at (423) 648-2121.

Conference Highlights

This year’s theme “Tourism Rocks!” reflects the ongoing “50th Anniversary of Rock ‘n’ Roll” in Memphis. Conference highlights include:

- Nine educational seminars featuring such issues as the European market, electronic marketing, the Tennessee Tourism News Bureau, marketing on a shoe string and crisis management.

- Opening Keynote Speaker, futurist Ed Barlow, shares valuable insights about lifestyle influences and challenges that lay ahead in the 21st century.
- Addresses to the industry by Governor Phil Bredesen and Commissioner Susan Whitaker indicate what has happened and what lays ahead for the department and the Tennessee tourism industry.
- Closing Keynote Speaker, Arthur Keith, senior vice president and general manager for Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center.
- Opening Reception at the Memphis Zoo and sightseeing trips to the newest and greatest city attractions.
- A Tourism Marketplace with special events, such as the silent auction, and “very cool” evening events that focus on Memphis’ unique sites and sounds. ■



Economic Impact & Visitation Reports Available

The 2002 "Economic Impact of Travel on Tennessee Counties" report is available online at www.state.tn.us/tourdev under the "Reports" heading. The report focuses on the economic impact, revenue, tax collections and employment data for each of the 95 counties in Tennessee. The Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) prepares the reports for the department.

Release of the report online is part of the department's ongoing efforts to enhance the dissemination of economic and statistical research to the Tennessee travel industry. Economic impact reports are also useful tools for reporting results, recruiting new attractions, growing existing businesses and encouraging more revenue generation. Contact Patricia Gray for additional research information or a hard copy of the report at (615) 741-9004 or at

Patricia.Gray@state.tn.us. The 2003 report will be released at the Governor's Conference on Tourism in September.

The department also released online this month the "Top 50 Tennessee Attractions by Visitation." The report is found on the department's media and reports pages at www.state.tn.us/tourdev and at the Tennessee Tourism News Bureau site at www.tenntravelnews.com.

A total of 69 attractions reported from across Tennessee, representing a variety of cultural and entertainment venues, from The Hermitage and the Alex Haley House Museum to the Cumberland County Playhouse and the Libertyland/Mid-South Fair. Visitation figures are for the 2003 calendar year. Total visitation to all 69 reporting attractions included in the report is 20,550,738. The top twelve attractions by visitation are:

Rank by Reported Visitation	Attraction	Number of 2003 Visitation
1	Dollywood	2,200,000
2	Ripley's Aquarium of the Smokies	1,730,000
3	Bristol Motor Speedway	1,098,000
4	Ober Gatlinburg	920,876
5	Tennessee Aquarium	887,000
6	Memphis Zoo	784,317
7	Casey Jones Village	750,000
8	Graceland	581,804
9	Grand Ole Opry House & Opry Museum	560,000
10	Memphis Motorsports Park	551,554
11	Chattanooga Choo Choo	506,300
12	Tennessee Aquarium IMAX 3D Theater	502,000

Marketing Co-Op Applications Under Review

Tourism grant project applications for the 50-50 match in marketing co-op funds in the state's 2004-2005 fiscal year will be awarded August 31st. Each applicant will be officially notified of the award status in writing.

More than 75 applications were received from convention and visitors bureaus, chambers of commerce, local city and county governments,

municipalities, and non-profit, official tourism community development related organizations.

If you have questions relating to your application or the program in general, please contact Shannon Meldon-Corney, at (615) 741-2288 or Dianne Murray, at 615-741-9000. ■

Regional Reports



Front Row: Nicky Reynolds, on the far left, and Derrick Smith, on the far right, stand proudly with their fellow course members at the STS Marketing College this summer.

Also standing in the group, on the front row next to Nicky, are department sponsored classmates Mary Beth Hopper, executive director of the Tourism Association of Southwest Tenn.; Sheree Taylor, executive director of the South Central Tourism Association; and Susan Goldblatt, executive director of the Southeast Development District.

News from the Marketing College

The department's regional marketing and public relations managers **Nicky Reynolds** and **Derrick Smith** attended the 2004 Southeast Tourism Marketing College in Dahlonega, Georgia. The Southeast Tourism Society Marketing College is a professional development program, for one week each summer, turning the facilities of North Georgia College and State University into a laboratory to teach tourism marketing. Earning a TMP certification requires three years' participation, and this was the beginning of the first year for the department's marketing managers.

This is the thirteenth year for the program, which has graduated more than 250 tourism professionals. More

than 175 students participated this month, including 14 graduates who returned for a special seminar on internet marketing.

The 2004 graduates will be recognized in a special program at the STS spring meeting in Biloxi, Mississippi next March. Graduates from Tennessee are **Wendy Bryant**, Rutherford County CVB; **Anne Garrison-Ross**, Pigeon Forge Dept. of

Tourism; **Frances Johnson**, Clarksville-Montgomery Co. CVB; and **Ricky Rodriguez**, Wilson Co. CVB.

The STS Marketing College provides continuing education for tourism professionals in the southeast where tourism ranks as the first-, second- or third-largest industry in each STS member state. Students come from many sectors of the industry such as convention and visitors bureaus, chambers of commerce, attractions and hotels. Course topics range from family vacation research and special events marketing to media relations and creative advertising. Courses in heritage tourism and community/rural tourism have attracted special interest in recent years.



More than 30 senior executives in the travel and tourism industry serve as volunteer faculty. Among them are Karen Lingo, an editor at *Southern Living* magazine, who teaches students

how to work with travel journalists; Judy Randall, president of Randall Travel Marketing, who teaches tourism marketing fundamentals such as research, product development and how to develop an effective brochure; Don McEachern, president of North Star Destination Strategies, who teaches courses in brand-building for travel destinations and Tennessee's own **Alton Kelley**, executive director of the Middle Tennessee Visitors Bureau, who teaches developing cultural and heritage tourism.

To learn more about the college and STS go online at www.southeasttourism.org. STS marks its 20th anniversary in September.

Additional Regional Highlights

On Monday, Aug. 9th, **Derrick Smith** attended the IBF Light Heavyweight Championship media conference in Tunica, MS to welcome the boxing world to Memphis, Tennessee. On Saturday, Sept. 25th, Roy Jones Jr. and Glen Johnson will battle for the championship belt in Memphis at the new FedExForum. This will be the first sporting event held in the forum. For more information, contact Derrick at Derrick.Smith@state.tn.us.

Nicky Reynolds, along with Commissioner Whitaker and other staff members, toured Roane County this month. Nicky also attended the Grainger County Tomato Festival, and is teaching a workshop to Southeast Tennessee Tourism Association (SETTA) members Aug. 16 in Jasper and Aug. 17 in Dayton. The workshop will cover "Working with the Media." Contact Nicky if you would like to schedule a workshop in your area at Nicky.Reynolds@state.tn.us. ■

Sales Report/Lee Curtis

AMERICAN BUS ASSOCIATION MARKETPLACE 2005



CHICAGO ILLINOIS
FEBRUARY 4-9

Get Ready to Market at ABA Marketplace 2005

Now is the time to update your American Bus Association profile and register for the ABA Marketplace to be held Feb. 4-9, 2005 in Chicago. The national association wants to top the 2004 event in attendance and events, and already has registration, housing information and a schedule of events online at www.buses.org. While there you will also find suggestions for marketing to niche groups and links to online promotional materials for ABA members.

ABA currently represents approximately 950 motorcoach and tour companies in the U.S. and Canada. Another 2,300 members represent state and local travel and tourism industry organizations and business. ABA began in 1926 as a division of AAA and evolved into the American Bus Association in 1977. If you have any questions about Tennessee's role in the Marketplace, contact Lee Curtis at (615) 741-9045 or Lee.Curtis@state.tn.us.

Volunteers Needed for Travel South Showcase

Travel South USA Showcase is one of the largest trade shows in the U.S. In 2005 it will be held in Memphis on Feb. 12-16. Tourism industry volunteers are needed to assist in staffing the show. If you are interested, contact Shirley Davis Conner at Graceland in Memphis. You can reach Shirley at (901) 332-3322 or sdconner@elvis.com.



Upcoming Travel Industry Shows and Events

The department participates in tourism trade and travel shows each year. The following list is drawn from the department's calendar for mid-August – early December and may not reflect all scheduled shows as of press time.

ESTO (TIA) Professional Development

Boston, Massachusetts
August 21-14

The First Lady's Walk Across Tennessee

Kickoff Special Event, Memphis, Sept. 8
Walk continues intermittently through May, 2005

Tenn. Hotel & Lodging Assn. & Tenn. Restaurant Assn.

Consumer Show, Nashville
Sept. 8-10

Southeastern Tourism Society Annual Meeting

Professional Development, Atlanta, GA
Sept. 8-12

Tennessee Governor's Conference on Tourism

Professional Development, Memphis
Sept. 14-16

Tennessee Governor's Conference on

Economic & Community Development
Professional Development, Nashville
Sept. 21-23

Chattanooga/Smoky Mountain Nashville Fam/AAA

Sales Mission, Nashville/Chattanooga/Smoky Mountains
Sept. 25-Oct. 1

Grand Ole Opry Road Show

Sales Mission
Oct. 15, Los Angeles, CA
Oct. 16, Phoenix, AZ

Travel Industry Association of America Marketing Outlook Forum

Professional Development
Oct. 27, Phoenix, AZ
Oct. 28, Scottsdale, AZ

Ontario Motor Coach Association – Tentative

Trade Show, Toronto, Canada
Nov. 7-10

National Tourism Association (NTA)

Trade Show, Toronto, Canada
Nov. 12-16

Rhythms of the South

Trade Show, New Orleans, LA
Dec. 2-5

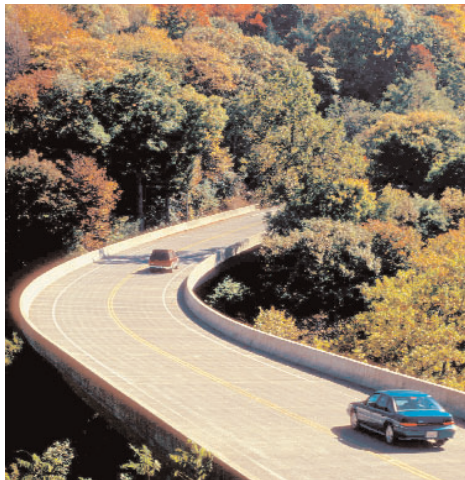
Fall Color Promotion In Its 15th Year

Labor Day is not the end of Tennessee's tourist season. Thanks to the variety of scenic drives and panoramic views of hardwood forests, the state switches gears and promotes the colors of autumn.

Now in its fifteenth year, the Fall Color Forecast promotes agri-tourism businesses, scenic drives and annual events to callers dialing the annual Fall Color Forecast line at 1-800-697-4200. The line opens on September 27th and runs through November 30th with weekly messages forecasting where the leaves are changing, and what to expect in upcoming festivals. Callers to the toll-free line also have the opportunity to order a free Tennessee Vacation Guide.

Color Spotters Needed

The theme of this year's Fall Color promotion mirrors the department's slogan through "The stage is set for Fall in Tennessee!" The seasonal promotion will be launched through the news bureau to the Tennessee media and to selected drive time media markets out of state. The Tennessee tourism industry may participate in the annual promotion by using the slogan, encouraging travel in their area and by soliciting volunteers to



▲ Color spotters drive along the *Cherohala Skyway in Southeast Tennessee to check on fall color peaks.*

act as color spotters. Spotters should be registered with the promotion by September 20th.

Spotters can be members of the tourism industry, retired persons, outdoor enthusiasts and park rangers or naturalists. Spotters are required to email reports of color changes in their area every Monday during the promotion to Lorene.Lambert@state.tn.us. Emailed messages from spotters should indicate where they anticipate color change for the coming weekend and make suggestions for color driving routes. Spotters are not required to submit events as these are drawn from the

autumn events brochure submissions to the department.

Don't Forget...

Promote the season by encouraging resident travel within a fifty-mile radius of home and suggest weekend getaway trips. Promotions aimed at Tennessee's major urban centers will encourage people to travel out to small towns, scenic parks, outdoor festivals and historic sites.

Market to hikers, canoers, photographers, honeymooners and RV campers. Look for niche markets, such as senior citizen groups, horse clubs, bike clubs and motorcycle clubs. Promoting Tennessee's blossoming agri-tourism businesses is another way to increase visitation. Corn and straw mazes, farm accommodations, county fairs, harvest fruit stands and seasonal pick-it-yourself markets are becoming increasingly popular. ■



◀Cycling a trail in the *Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area*



▲ *The mix of hardwood species with evergreens creates wonderful patchwork color all across Tennessee. This shot was taken on the Cumberland Plateau.*

Annual Events Deadline

The department's communications division deadline for submissions to the 2005 *Annual Events* brochure is September 15th. Contact Carlynne Foster at (615) 741-7994 or at Carlynne.Foster@state.tn.us for guidelines and an events submission form. *Seasonal Events* brochure forms are also available.

Carlynne would also like to receive 300 dpi or greater jpg images of your event via email or on CD for publication or promotional use. Prints are not accepted because they do not scan well. Copyrighted images from professional photographers are also not accepted, unless they have volunteered public domain use or sold the images to your tourism organization. ■



▲ *Cherokee Days of Recognition, Cleveland, August 7-8*

On the Scene in Tennessee



▲ Commissioner Whitaker and officials from Roane County review an exhibit of the Waterfront Development Master Plan for Kingston. The project is one of Tennessee's newest downtown revitalization projects, tying riverfront and downtown shopping districts together.



▲ Commissioner Whitaker poses with Carol Hawkins and llama from the Ocoee Mist Farms B&B and Llama Hikes of Benton, Tennessee. Carol's husband, Kevin is in the background. To the left of the Commissioner is Shelda Rees, Tourism Director for the Chattanooga CVB and Susan Goldblatt, executive director of the Southeast Tennessee Tourism Association (SETTA). The occasion was a SETTA press conference on agri-tourism held in Hamilton County in July.

Commissioner Whitaker and department staff members continue to participate in a variety of events and news conferences across the state. Highlights of the department's calendar last month and this month included the following:

Date	Event	Location	Accompanied By
7/15	Ribbon Cutting/New Welcome Center	Sevier	Page
7/23	Roane County Tour	Roane/Kingston	Brunson, Rep. Ferguson
7/24	Tenn. River 600—Grand Marshal	Knox County	
7/27	SETTA Press Conference/Agri-Tourism	Hamilton	Qualls-Brooks
7/28	Channel 5 Nashville/Morning Live Show	Davidson	Smith
8/5	East TN Marketing Partnership Meeting	Knox	Qualls-Brooks, Lightsey, Corney
8/6	Country Music Hall of Fame Night Train Exhibit	Davidson	Qualls-Brooks, Bandy, White, Hicks
8/17	Speaker/Sumner County Democratic Party	Sumner	Brunson, Smith
8/19	Greene County Tour/CG Partnership Speaker	Greene	Brunson, Rep. Yokley
8/20	Speaker/Athena Awards Ceremony	Bradley	Reynolds
8/21-25	ESTO	Boston, Mass.	Lightsey, Gray

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25th Floor, Wm Snodgrass/Tennessee Tower
312 Eighth Avenue North, Nashville, TN 37243

Newsletter Staff

Commissioner	Susan H. Whitaker
Assistant Commissioner – Admin.	Tom Lightsey
Assistant Commissioner – Marketing	Phyllis Qualls-Brooks
Creative Services Manager	Lorene Lambert
Communications Coordinator	Carlyne Foster

Credits

Photography: Jed DeKalb, Gaylord, Eliza Brunson, Nicky Reynolds
Graphic Design: Art Colebank, Central Printing Graphic Design, Tennessee Dept. of General Services.

Send your comments and suggestions to the editor, Lorene Lambert, at (615) 741-9025 or Lorene.Lambert@state.tn.us. We welcome your input as we work together to put the spotlight on Tennessee!

The September edition of Tourism E-news will be published after the Tennessee Governor's Conference on Tourism.

